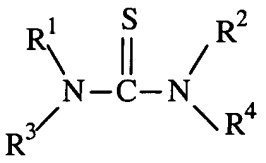
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

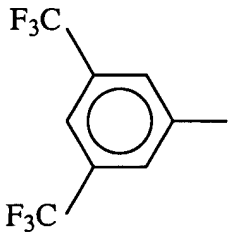
LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A substituted thiourea having the general formula



wherein R^1 comprises an alkyl, alkaryl or aryl group or a substituted derivative thereof, and contains at least one fluorine atom, R^2 is $-CH_2-CF_2-CF_2-CF_3$, and each of R^3 and R^4 is selected from the group consisting of H, alkyl, alkaryl, aryl, substituted derivatives of H, alkyl, alkaryl or aryl, and fluorine-containing derivatives of H, alkyl, alkaryl or aryl.

2. (original): A thiourea according to Claim 1 wherein R^1 is



3. (canceled).

4. (canceled).

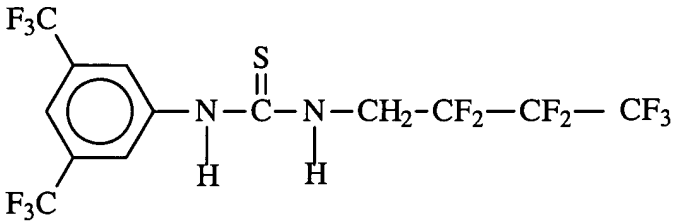
5. (canceled).

6. (canceled).

7. (original): A thiourea according to Claim 1 wherein R^3 is H.

8. (original): A thiourea according to Claim 1 wherein R^4 is H.

9. (original): A thiourea according to Claim 2 wherein the substituted thiourea is of the formula



10. (canceled).

11. (canceled).

12. (canceled).

13. (previously presented): A method according to Claim 19 wherein the noble metal is gold, platinum, silver, palladium or rhodium.

14. (previously presented): A method according to Claim 19 wherein the supercritical fluid is supercritical carbon dioxide.

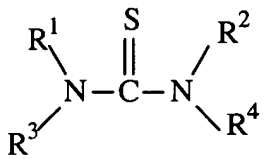
15. (previously presented): A method according to Claim 19 wherein the treatment with substituted thiourea is performed in the presence of an oxidant.

16. (original): A method according to Claim 15 wherein the oxidant comprises ferric (Fe^{III}) ions.

17. (previously presented): A method according to Claim 19 wherein the treatment and extraction are carried out at room temperature and are followed by recrystallisation of the product from petroleum ether at a temperature in the range of 100°C to 120°C.

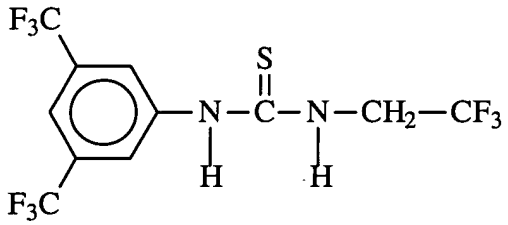
18. (canceled).

19. (currently amended) A method for extracting a noble metal from a matrix, the method comprising the steps of treating the matrix with a substituted thiourea having the general formula



wherein R^1 and R^2 independently comprise an alkyl, alkaryl or aryl group or a substituted derivative thereof, and contain at least one fluorine atom, and each of R^3 and R^4 is selected from the group consisting of H, alkyl, alkaryl, aryl, substituted derivatives of H, alkyl, alkaryl or aryl, and fluorine-containing derivatives of H, alkyl, alkaryl or aryl, and subjecting the thus treated matrix to supercritical fluid extraction.

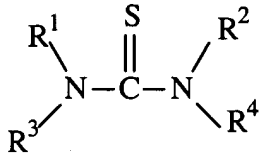
20. (previously presented): A substituted thiourea having the general formula



21. (currently amended) ~~Use of a substituted thiourea in the extraction of~~ A method of extracting gold, platinum, silver, palladium or rhodium from a matrix comprising:

treating the matrix with ~~the~~ a substituted thiourea, and

subjecting the ~~thus~~ treated matrix to supercritical fluid extraction, wherein the substituted thiourea ~~having~~ has the general formula



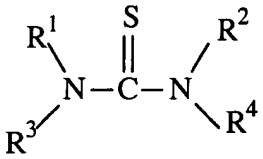
wherein R^1 and R^2 independently comprise an alkyl, alkaryl or aryl group or a substituted derivative thereof, and contain at least one fluorine atom, and each of R^3 and R^4 is selected from

the group consisting of H, alkyl, alkaryl, aryl, substituted derivatives of H, alkyl, alkaryl or aryl, and fluorine-containing derivatives of H, alkyl, alkaryl or aryl.

22. (currently amended) ~~Use of a substituted thiourea in supercritical carbon dioxide in the~~ A method of solubilising and carrying ~~of~~ noble metals for deposition or impregnation thereof, comprising:

treating the matrix with a substituted thiourea, and

subjecting the treated matrix to supercritical fluid extraction, wherein the substituted thiourea ~~having~~ has the general formula



wherein R^1 and R^2 independently comprise an alkyl, alkaryl or aryl group or a substituted derivative thereof, and contain at least one fluorine atom, and each of R^3 and R^4 is selected from the group consisting of H, alkyl, alkaryl, aryl, substituted derivatives of H, alkyl, alkaryl or aryl, and fluorine-containing derivatives of H, alkyl, alkaryl or aryl.